

Meeting Highlights | April 26, 2007

Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan Basin Advisory Panel

Meeting Overview

- Panel members will begin briefing their constituent organizations in June and July. The purposes of these briefings are twofold: to inform constituents about plan elements and to solicit feedback on the plan.
- The Panel discussed the goal and objectives for the groundwater management plan. The Panel will review these objectives again later this fall after developing other plan elements.
- The Panel is forming a technical subcommittee to review and provide feedback on text of the groundwater management plan.
- The Panel reviewed a proposal to analyze several future scenarios for water use and conservation in the Sonoma Valley using the USGS model. The technical subcommittee will assist with defining the details of these scenarios. The Panel will review the results of the analyses later this summer.

Next Meeting

Thursday, May 31, 2007, 2:00-5:30, Sonoma Community Center

NOTE: This is the fifth Thursday of the month (not the fourth)!

Work Plan

The Basin Advisory Panel is moving along in its work plan in a timely fashion. The goal is to finish a draft plan by the end of the year. The major elements of the work plan are:

- Organization and Common Information--Completed Fall 2006
- Goals and Objectives – Final draft available
- Monitoring Program – Framework developed, will finalize this summer
- Implementation – Summer and Fall 2007

Recycled Water

The Panel had a brief conversation about recycled water. In June, Bob Hultquist from the California Department of Health Services will present the quality of recycled water. Staff will forward these questions to him for consideration during his talk.

- Will consumers accept the use of recycled water on organic-certified products?
- Are drinking water standards met by recycled water?
- What, if any, are the potential harmful constituents in recycled water? How do these constituents interact? What are the implications of this interaction?

Sonoma growers are discussing how they might want to adopt the USDA standards in the Valley.

People are concerned that they will lose their groundwater rights if they use recycled water. Recycled water issues, like those captured above, need to be addressed in the plan either in a chapter or some other focused section.

Action: Bill Keene will share a study on recycled water use in the Carneros region. He will also share the materials presented in Santa Rosa at an event focused on recycled water.

Basin Management Objectives

The Basin Advisory Panel reviewed a new version of the basin management objectives. Most of the issues of concern were resolved during the meeting. The objectives need to be measurable, but can encompass a broader focus of water resources, consistent with the ideas put forth by panel members. The underlined text below needs additional discussion.

Next Steps

The Panel will work out a few more issues and then set the objectives aside until discussions on implementation begin. Once the Panel has framed implementation issues, it will need to revisit the objectives.

**Groundwater Management Plan Goal &
BASIN MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES
for the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Basin
Facilitator Modifications based on 4/26/2007 Panel Discussion
Last Updated 5/2/2007**

(underlined text needs additional discussion or consideration)

Goal

The goal of the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan is to locally manage, protect, and enhance groundwater resources for all beneficial uses, in a sustainable, environmentally sound, economical, and equitable manner for generations to come. (Approved by Panel 3/22/07)

Consider changing “groundwater resources” to “water resources”

Basin Management Objectives

Quantity of Groundwater

1. Maintain groundwater elevations for the support of beneficial uses of groundwater and against inelastic land surface subsidence.

2. Balance use of groundwater relative to other water sources.

Decrease dependence on groundwater through conservation, recycled water, and other water supplies.

3. Protect against adverse impacts on surface water quantity from interaction between groundwater and surface water flows.

4. Identify and protect groundwater recharge areas and enhance the recharge of groundwater where appropriate.

Quality of Groundwater

5. Maintain or improve groundwater quality for beneficial uses.

Notes: Minimize saline intrusion. Treated appropriate to the use

6. Protect against adverse impacts on water quality from interaction between groundwater and surface water flows.

Add Bay water to the explanation of *protect against adverse impacts on water quality from interaction between groundwater and surface water flows*.

Community Engagement

7. Improve the community's awareness of groundwater planning, water resources and legal issues.

Notes: Replace groundwater issues with "water resources and legal issues"

Consider: groundwater plan, goals & objectives,

Technical and legal issues (water rights and clean water act)

Include the community's understanding of recycled water

Water resources in the Sonoma Valley and water rights, generally, and the groundwater management plan, specifically

This objective should cover: water resources, water rights, the plan itself, our dependence on groundwater, the importance of it, factors that influence groundwater levels and quality, practices that enhance and protect groundwater.

8. Increase water conservation and water use efficiency practices that help to achieve the plan goal.

Management Approach

9. Improve the understanding of the Sonoma Valley basin groundwater resource through consistent monitoring and focused studies.

Consider adding: Adjust implementation priorities in response to new information.

10. Manage groundwater with local control.

Discuss and define "local".

11. Explore, identify and maximize non-regulatory approaches to manage the groundwater resource.

Alternatives Analysis

The technical staff are working to identify several scenarios that could be analyzed using the USGS model. The information will be used to review potential projects that might assist in implementing the plan and to help prioritize recommendations in the plan. The model will estimate the possible groundwater level benefit of various projects and alternatives. The Panel will review the results of the analyses later this summer.

The proposed study concentrates are two scenarios in the Sonoma Valley:

1. Additional imported surface water is INCREASED.
2. Additional imported surface water is LIMITED.

Within each of these scenarios, the model would evaluate several project alternatives. The projects that might be evaluated are:

- a. Storm water is used for recharge in the North Sonoma Valley—flood water is captured and used for recharge
- b. Aquifer storage & recovery (ASR) in the Central Sonoma Valley—injects available wet year and rainy season potable water into wells in groundwater depression areas
- c. Increase recycled water use

- d. Increase conservation practices beyond the typical norm

Recharge: Ownership and Water Rights Issues

In response to several questions, the Panel clarified:

- If someone injects water into another's well, then the entity that injected the water legally owns that volume of water contained in the well; however, not the groundwater rights.
- The ownership of that volume of the water can be transferred to another.
- Water rights on a land can also be transferred to another.

Other Notes

The plan will identify how the model may be improved and data gaps.

After some discussion, the Panel supported looking at conservation as its own issue. Although some Panel members felt conservation was instrumental to water management and should be pursued without any limitations, others from water agencies reported that this kind of information could really assist them in planning and creating support for conservation efforts.

Bin—Discuss during Implementation

- Consider recommending that residents have cisterns.

Organizations for Public Outreach Briefings

The Panel is now at a point in which it should conduct briefings with constituent organizations and other interested parties. The Panel has identified the following organizations for this purpose.

Water Agency

SCWA Board (mid-summer) -Bill Keene

Valley of the Moon Board -Mark Bramfitt

Small Private Water Companies

Temelac Retirement Community (water from Valley of the Moon; groundwater for landscaping) –
Krishna Kumar and Mark Bramfitt

Homeowners Associations (Diamond A and George Ranch) – John Robb

Government

Sonoma Valley Citizen's Advisory Committee -Mark Bramfitt and Clarence Jenkins

Sonoma City Council -Dave Goodison

California Department of Fish & Game – Leandra Swent

Ag

North Bay Ag Alliance -Tito Sasaki

Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance --Ned Hill and Norm Goldstein

RCD – Leandra Swent

Grange – Lisa Micheli

Business

Sonoma Chamber of Commerce –Mark Bramfitt

Sonoma Development Center – Mark Bramfitt

Rotary

NGOs and Conservation Groups

Sonoma Valley Streams Group – Lisa Micheli

Sonoma County Water Coalition --Caitlin Cornwall, Kathy Pons and Stephen Fuller-Rowe

Sonoma Ecology Center Board -Ed Nelson and Caitlin Cornwall)

Residential Well Owners

Carriger Road and Felder Road Area -Mark Bramfitt

West Valley Alliance -Catherine Culligan

Valley of the Moon Alliance – Kathy Pons

Misc

Kiwannis

Soroptimas

Sons in Retirement

Ducks Unlimited